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REMARKS

Claims 1-16 were pending in the present application. Claims 1, and 6-8 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer and new claims 17-39 added herein. Thus, claims 1-5, and 9-39 are now pending in the present application. Reconsideration of the present application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-4 stand rejected under the doctrine of double patenting. Claim 1 has been cancelled and claims 2-4 amended to depend from claim 5 rendering the rejection moot.

Claims 1-4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 (b) as being allegedly anticipated by Kon'i et al. U.S. Patent No. 6,166,453. Claim 1 has been cancelled and claims 2-4 amended to depend from claim 5 rendering the rejection moot.

Claims 5-10, and 12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Kon'i et al. in view of Ueda U.S. Patent No. 5,848,366. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

It should first be noted that, Applicants challenge the claim of inherency with regard to the control unit allegedly disclosed in Kon'i et al. Applicants contend that Kon'i et al. described a connection loop is established between branch power wires, load drive circuits, and mutual connection power wires. The Body Control Module, e.g. BCM 3, load drive circuits 10 and 14, and switching circuit 106, described in Kon'i et al. are distinguishable from the claimed load drive apparatus driving a switching means having a switching device and control unit. BCM 3, clearly fails to, *inter alia*, switch current from a power source to a load as claimed but rather, at best, controls power to load drive circuits 10, [12,] and 14. The description of load drive circuits 10 and 14 further fails to include mention of switching, except that BCM3 is configured to switch load drive circuits 10, 12, and 14 out of circuit if an anomalous load drive circuit is

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detected. Switching circuit 106, at best controls the application and interruption of power to Intelligent Power Devices IPDs 110, 111, 112.

It should further be noted the RC network coupled to comparator 34 of Ueda can be distinguished from, for example, the claimed first resistor and first capacitor where a power source terminal is connected to a power source side of the power source, a ground terminal is connected to a ground side of the power source, a voltage supply line is connected to the power source terminal to supply a voltage to the switching device and the control unit, a ground line connects the switching device and the control unit to the ground terminal, a first capacitor is connected between the power source terminal and the ground terminal, and a first resistor is connected in series with the first capacitor.

Applicants further note that in addition to the aforementioned deficiencies, the applied art combination is improperly motivated and moreover, the individual references, when examined carefully, are revealed to clearly teach away from each other. For example, the clearly stated purpose of the invention of Kon'i et al. is to reduce the number of power wires typical of conventional load driving arrangements by grouping of loads driven by load driving circuits (see, e.g., col 1, line 18-19). In contrast, the load driving control arrangement of Ueda is specifically and necessarily configured with a one-to-one correspondence between a load driving circuit and an individual load such that the necessariness of driving individual loads is determined by a microcomputer *on an individual basis*, and individual compulsory loads are powered if the microcomputer fails, thus in a configuration according to Kon'i et al., e.g. one where loads are grouped such determinations would not be possible, would be in conflict with the teachings of Ueda.

For at least the reasons set forth herein above, e.g. all the elements are not taught or suggested and, further, the applied art combination is improperly motivated since the references

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teach away from each other, a prima facie case of obviousness has not been established. It is respectfully requested that the rejection of claims 5-10, and 12 should be reconsidered and withdrawn.

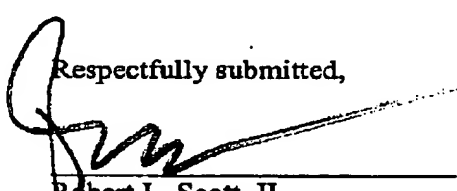
The allowability of claims 11, and 13-16 is noted with appreciation. Claims 11, 13, and 14 have been rewritten in independent form and are thus believed allowable. In addition, new claims 26 and 27 corresponding to claims 15 and 16 rewritten in independent form are also believed allowable.

New claims 17-25, and 28-39, by reciting features believed allowable for at least the reasons set forth herein above are also believed allowable. Favorable consideration is hereby requested.

In view of the foregoing, the applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance and a timely notice to that effect is respectfully requested. If questions relating to patentability remain, the examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone.

Please charge any unforeseen fees that may be due to Deposit Account No. 50-1147.

Respectfully submitted,



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